

Report of the Historical Committee to the January 2006 meeting of the ARRL Board

January 2006 QST carried an update from Archivist Perry Williams, W1UED, about progress in documenting and inventorying the ARRL's collection of documents and artifacts:

ARRL Antiques, Annals and Archives

Perry Williams, W1UED

The effort to archive valuable pieces of ARRL and Amateur Radio history began in earnest in 2002, when a 40 year employee of ARRL (that would be me...) returned to 225 Main Street to put in 20 hours a week as Archivist. Shortly afterward, Charles Griffen, W1GYR, a West Hartford amateur and retired librarian, volunteered to assist one day a week. As of November 9, 2005, he had logged 170 hours with ARRL this year, and nearly 700 total.

If you think preserving our history may not have much practical value, a quick story: On his way to the 2005 Dayton Hamvention, IARU Region 1 President Ole Garpestad, LA2RR, visited the Archives. He told us that the early records of the Norwegian Radio Relay League had been destroyed during the Quisling regime in Nazi-occupied Norway. Ole spent some time in the Archives area and we were able to furnish him with copies of lost documents, to his surprise and delight.

Another important part of the work is our stash of photographs—including nine file drawers full of photos used in QST and other ARRL publications, sorted roughly in chronological order.

Almost all the W1AW logbooks have been archived. On an "as time permits: please be patient" basis, we might be able to verify a log entry. Please don't ask, however, unless you're 99% sure of the date and time, as well as the call and band you were using. We also have logs from W1MK before the great flood of 1936 washed the station out of ARRL's collective life. Unfortunately, the W1MK logs are not in a condition where they can be searched for casual reasons.

There is still a long way to go. Currently, we're listing, organizing and merging a very scattered collection of folders relating to 81 years of democracy within ARRL—the tracks left by ARRL officers and directors. You can support ARRL's commitment to vintage radio by sending a generous contribution to the ARRL Preservation of Artifacts Fund, 225 Main St, Newington CT 06111-1494, or donate on the Web at <https://www.arrl.org/forms/development/donations/basic/>

Perry Williams has been concentrating on digging into the many boxes and file drawers full of documents and photographs, with 37 of them "listed, labeled, and organized into usable form", another 66 boxes in "as found" order with documentation about their contents, and another 34 yet to be seriously examined.

Chief Operating Officer Kramer has been working with the Pride Committee of staff members looking to make improvements to the look of the inside of Newington building. Some work has already been done to prototype new display cards for the cabinets that hold historical artifacts in the hallways.

Just this week a very interesting map was delivered to the historical collection room by Director Walstrom. He brought a donation from a family in Iowa who found a very interesting USA call area map printed in 1930 that displayed the callsigns of all licensed amateurs and their location on the map. Of course at that time there was no "zero" call area, Virginia was a W3, some of New York was in the 8th district, and Nevada and Utah hams had 6th call area callsigns. Once repaired and mounted, this will make for a fascinating wall display somewhere in Newington in the future.

We do not have the space for a lot of physical artifacts, but have been accepting some special artifacts as they are offered to us during the year. The inventory of documents is nearing completion and once that's complete we will have to start working on the physical artifacts next.

Tom Frenaye

Historical Committee

Tom Frenaye, K1KI, chairman

Al Cohen, W1FXQ

Charles Griffen, W1GYR

Jim McCobb, K1LU

Les Shattuck, K4NK

Perry Williams, W1UED, HQ archivist

19 January 2006